MASTER OF ARTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

This program prepares our students to work as leaders in teaching or administration in early childhood settings, including preschools and child development programs.

In addition, the program prepares students to teach early childhood education topics in community colleges or adult education programs. Our students often continue their education to pursue research or doctoral degrees as well as other forms of professional leadership. The program provides a strong foundation in child development and in developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive practices.

Students may choose the full-time MA program which is two years or the part-time MA program which generally takes three years.

The full-time MA programs can be combined with a multiple subject credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/early-childhood-multiple-subjects-credential) (for K–8 teaching) or an early childhood special education credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/early-childhood-special-education-credential).

Program Goals

- Provide students with many different theoretical perspectives and scientific and practical knowledge to understand and support human development and learning
- Prepare students to be learners and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Prepare reflective and critical thinkers who examine issues about the development of infants and young children and their relationships in various contexts: school, hospital, family, community, and with an understanding of culture.
- Prepare students to work as part of a team and to develop collegial relationships with fellow students and faculty.
- Teach students how to assess children in a culturally competent and developmentally appropriate way and to link assessment information to individual interventions.

Distinctive Features

- Mills College Children’s School (https://www.millscollegechildrensschool.org): Students have the opportunity to connect theory and practice by working in the Mills College laboratory school, where they are closely mentored by experienced and knowledgeable early childhood professionals. Part-time students engage in yearlong placements based on their interests and career goals.
- Social justice and equity: Graduates leave the program inspired to use teaching and leadership to improve the lives of young children and families, deepen student learning, increase their own knowledge, transform early learning programs, schools, and services, and increase educational equity.
- Strength-based approach: The program teaches students to approach early childhood with an appreciation of the diverse resources that children and families bring to young children’s education and care.

Course Work

Course work is designed to prepare students to teach in diverse settings, and integrates theory and practice. See the Requirements (p. 1) page for a list of courses required for this program; see the Course Descriptions (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/#coursestext) page for paragraph-length descriptions of individual courses.

Fieldwork

Students who enter directly into the full-time MA program spend their first year student teaching in an infant-toddler or preschool classroom at the Mills College Children’s School under the supervision of highly experienced head teachers. This student teaching experience is paired with a year-long course in which students reflect on their teaching practice. In the second year, students may participate in internships in a variety of early childhood organizations. Depending on their interests and professional goals, students might intern in local preschool programs as administrators, in national or local research organizations as research assistants, in community college classrooms as student teachers, or in local policy and advocacy organizations. Part-time students engage in yearlong field placements based on their interests and the emphasis they have chosen in order to expand their professional network.

Those who enter the program after completing the Multiple Subject Credential Program spend at least one semester in an infant-toddler or preschool classroom at the Mills College Children’s School. They may spend the last semester in the Mills College Children’s School, a public preschool or primary classroom, or in an alternative education setting for young children.

Career Opportunities

Students are prepared for teaching, intervention, administration, evaluation, public policy, research, and nonprofit and community leadership, and many further their studies with advanced degrees.

Requirements

Master of Arts in Education With an Emphasis in Early Childhood Education (MA/ECE)

Minimum of 39 semester course credits

This program prepares students for teaching and professional leadership in preschool, child-care services, and other programs for children and families. Other possibilities include public policy, research, adult education, and parent education. Students may prepare for professional opportunities in program development for private organizations and public agencies, and for more advanced graduate work. It is possible to complete both a master’s degree and a multiple subject credential with an emphasis in early childhood education by enrolling in the MA/ECE and MA/ECE/MSC programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 214</td>
<td>Family Systems and Cultural Diversity: Connections with Schools, Communities, and Hospital Setting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 234</td>
<td>Research Methodology for Observing Children</td>
<td>3</td>
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In consultation with your advisor students will select an additional 3 semester course credits from the School of Education and College offerings. This additional course work will be individualized based on students’ professional goals and previous experience.

### Related Programs

#### Teacher Education
- Multiple Subject Credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/multiple-subject-credential)
  - MA in Education, Early Childhood Education (p. 1)
- Single Subject Credential in Humanities (Art, English, or Social Science) (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/single-subject-credential-humanities)
- Single Subject Credential in Mathematics or Science (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/single-subject-credential-math-science)
- MA in Education (MEET) (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-education-emphasis-teaching)
- Language, Culture, and Trauma Certificate in Teaching (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/language-culture-trauma-certificate-teaching)

#### Early Childhood Education
- MA in Early Childhood Education—MA/ECE (p. 1)
  - Early Childhood Multiple Subject Credential—MA/ECE/MSC (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/early-childhood-multiple-subjects-credential)
- MA in Child Life—MA/ECE/CL (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-education-child-life--hospitals)
  - Early Childhood Special Education Credential—MA/ECE/ECSE (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/early-childhood-special-education-credential)

#### Educational Leadership
- MA in Educational Leadership (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-educational-leadership)
  - Early Childhood Leadership (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-early-childhood-leadership)
  - Independent School Leadership (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-educational-leadership-emphasis-independent-school-leadership)
- MA in Educational Leadership (online) (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/ma-educational-leadership-online)
  - Joint MBA/MA in Educational Leadership (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/joint-degree-programs/joint-mbama-educational-leadership)
  - Doctorate (EdD) in Educational Leadership (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/eddd/requirementstext)
  - Administrative Services Credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/administrative-services-credential)

#### Infant Mental Health
- Infant Mental Health (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/infant-mental-health/ma-infant-mental-health)
- Infant Mental Health with Special Education Credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/infant-mental-health/ma-infant-mental-health-with-credential)

#### Accelerated Degree Programs
- BA/MA Early Childhood Special Education/Teaching Credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/accelerated-degree-programs/bama-child-developmentearly-childhood-special-education-credential)
- BA/MA Education/Teaching Credential (https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/accelerated-degree-programs/bama-teacher-education)
- BA/MA Infant Mental Health (https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/accelerated-degree-programs/bama-infant-mental-health)

#### Certificates
- Waldorf Professional Development Certificate (https://catalog.mills.edu/graduate/programs/education/certificate-in-waldorf-education)